

1997-98 SESSION  
COMMITTEE HEARING  
RECORDS

Committee Name:

Joint Committee on  
Finance (JC-Fi)

Sample:

Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

- 05hrAC-EdR\_RCP\_pt01a
- 05hrAC-EdR\_RCP\_pt01b
- 05hrAC-EdR\_RCP\_pt02

➤ Appointments ... Appt

➤ \*\*

➤ Clearinghouse Rules ... CRule

➤ \*\*

➤ Committee Hearings ... CH

➤ \*\*

➤ Committee Reports ... CR

➤ \*\*

➤ Executive Sessions ... ES

➤ \*\*

➤ Hearing Records ... HR

➤ \*\*

➤ Miscellaneous ... Misc

➤ 97hrJC-Fi\_Misc\_pt143\_LFB

➤ Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

➤ \*\*

SUNDAY, APRIL 20, 1997

OUR VIEW

# School study worth funding

**W**ould substantially reduced class sizes help schools teach children of poverty?

There is an interesting statewide pilot program which seeks to answer that very question. Unfortunately, the five-year study is threatened in only its second year.

Here's the issue. Last year the state began a pilot program called SAGE (Student Achievement Guarantee in Education). In it, 30 specific elementary schools in 21 school districts — including two schools in La Crosse — were given additional state funding in order to reduce class sizes in kindergarten and first grade.

Next year the program was to have increased to second grade. Eventually, it would cover kindergarten through third grade and would continue for a total of five years.

In addition to the 30 schools which got increased funding, 50 schools would serve as a control group. The control schools would continue to function as they always have.

Teachers in each school would administer standardized tests to compare the students in SAGE against the control schools, to determine whether the small class sizes made a difference in how well the students learn.

Researchers at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's Urban Research Center would evaluate the data.

We think the SAGE program is worth funding for the entire five-year period. For the next two years, that would mean an additional \$8 million. Gov. Tommy Thompson, who has added \$200 million in new state aid for school technology assistance, chose to retain the SAGE program in his budget, but froze it at last year's level.

That level of funding will not allow the experiment to continue. Surely there are some programs in the state budget that could be cut to allow the SAGE experiment to be completed.

What's at issue? In La Crosse there are two schools involved, both with high levels of poverty, as measured by the percentage of students who receive free or reduced school lunches.

Hamilton School has 93 percent of its student body on free or reduced-cost lunches. At Franklin, the other SAGE school, the percentage is 67 percent.

Hamilton Principal John Schroeder accompanied state legislators and media representatives on a tour of his SAGE classrooms on Monday. Standing in one kindergarten, Schroeder told reporters that he had to give alarm clocks to some of the students because their parents were

LA CROSSE  
**Tribune**

## Editorial board

**Publisher:** James P. Santori

**Editor:** David Stoeffler

**Opinion page editor:** Richard Mial

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**Local news editor:** John Smalley

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not getting them up in time for school.

One teacher said her class toured a local food assistance pantry, and out of 15 students only one had never been there before. These are kids who are plainly at risk. If we don't do what it takes to provide for their early education, how much will they cost society later in welfare or criminal justice system costs?

State Rep. Mike Huebsch, an Onalaska Republican, views SAGE as a "prevention" program. He said the philosophy behind it is not unlike that of a program pioneered by the La Crosse Family and Children's Center, in which new parents are paired with a child care worker right in the hospital nursery.

Are these extraordinary efforts? Certainly. But they are efforts to target the extraordinary assistance to precisely where the problem exists.

SAGE is based on a similar program in the state of Tennessee. A study there showed "substantial and lasting benefits for poor children that were in small classes during their k-3 years," according to a fact sheet prepared by the state Department of Public Instruction.

Let's find out if the program can get a similar result here. What SAGE does is give each participating school district an additional amount of money up to \$2,000 per pupil in the participating classrooms. It is only with that additional state assistance that the schools are able to provide the extra staff needed.

Under state revenue caps, providing the additional staff would be difficult to impossible, even if the districts wanted to do so. In La Crosse, which currently has declining enrollments, administrators say they would be unable to do it without the extra state money.

Do smaller classes bring better results? Principal Schroeder and his teachers think so.

Let's make sure we find out if that is true statistically as well as anecdotally. The only way to do that is to continue to fund SAGE for the full five years.

It is a good investment.

April 17, 1997

To Whom it may concern:

Having served on the WPR Board of Directors as a director and the Vice President. Besides being a faithful listener and financial supporter, I am aware of the importance of this media to me and my community's daily life. I am disgusted and shocked to once again hear that this service is being subjected to a reduction in financial support from tax dollars.

The Association is composed of listeners with various tastes and desires. They have supported WPR with their tax dollars to keep this worthy service on the air. Repeatedly, they are being asked to increase their dollar donation.

There is a limit to how much money can be raised from these supporters. They already provide nearly  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the total funding for WPR each year.

For this reason I ask the members of the Committee support changing the Governor's proposed budget to reduce or eliminate the 5% cut in the WW Extension or to exempt Public Rides from that reduction.

I also ask that some Committee to support full  
funding for the 4% salary increases in the UW  
Septem or at minimum to provide the University  
the right to deal with any difference between salary  
increases and the funding provided by the State.

Thank you,

Patricia Sienkewicz  
713423 Fairground Ave  
Deleville WI 54456

# WWLEARN

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*Western Wisconsin Linked Education and Resource Network*

## **BUDGET HEARING - JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE EAU CLAIRE, APRIL 22, 1997**

### **TESTIMONY**

My name is Carol Popelka and I am the Director of the Western Wisconsin Linked Education and Resource Network, the acronym for which, W.W.L.E.A.R.N., is pronounced "We Learn." I am respectfully submitting this testimony in support of retention of the Distance Education Consulting Services currently being provided by the Wisconsin Educational Communications Board, the ECB.

The WWLEARN network is an emerging regional distance learning network which, when on-line, will link 12 public school districts in western Wisconsin, serving over 18,000 students and staff. The University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, Western Wisconsin Technical College and Viterbo College also plan to offer classes over the WWLEARN network, providing Post Secondary Enrollment Option courses for high school students and graduate courses for teachers.

The proposed state budget will eliminate a number of services that not only WWLEARN, but many other distance education networks around the state have come to rely on. The ECB awards and administers \$107,000 in grants annually to educational institutions to support planning for regional distance education and other telecommunications projects. Compared to the millions of dollars being proposed for technology, that amount may not seem significant, but these small grants have helped many distance education networks get started and later leverage dollars from the Education Technology Board (ETB).

Most critical to WWLEARN are the technical and programmatic consulting services being provided by the ECB to the more than 15 emerging regional distance education networks. These services include skilled assistance in strategic planning, needs assessment, technical design of the networks, purchasing, and governance structure. The ECB has also provided many networks starting out, 16 hours of professional engineering services which WWLEARN took advantage of when getting off the ground.

It is not only the emerging networks that utilize the expertise of the Distance Ed. staff at ECB. Ongoing technical and programmatic support is also provided to operating networks, facilitating the development of new resources, the acquisition and implementation of new technologies, and collaboration on program offerings. By strengthening these existing networks, the ECB has given the developing networks an additional source of information and support.

*Carol Popelka, WWLEARN Director*

The Governor has made it clear that Wisconsin should continue to take the lead in providing state-wide access to technology. The ECB's distance education consultants are helping to do just that. They direct and staff the Distance Education Technologies Interagency Collaboration group, DETIC, a forum for the discussion and implementation of statewide strategies to avoid duplication of effort and ensure equal access to education for all Wisconsin residents. DETIC membership is made up of 14 institutions and organizations that serve education in Wisconsin, including the UW system, the Technical College system, DOA, DPI, WAICU, WASB, WEAC, the CESA's, and others.

The consultants manage and staff the Distance Education Technologies Standards Forum, which facilitates the creation of technology standards to guide regional network development and technical interconnectivity. The elimination of this service alone would seriously hinder the expansion of statewide networking.

The consultants convene and staff the Wisconsin Distance Education Network Directors and Coordinators Forum. This group meets quarterly to address issues related to statewide interconnectivity of the 25 regional distance education networks and share information about best practices and programming. I have found this group to be extremely helpful as WWLEARN struggles through its developmental phase. The Directors and Coordinators, to a person, have been generous with both their time and advice. Without the ECB consultants to coordinate this Forum, I am concerned that the networking it affords us all will be seriously jeopardized.

The ECB Distance Education consultants work tirelessly to interconnect networks regardless of location or technology, for the purpose of sharing programming in an efficient and cost-effective manner. They compile, compose, maintain and disseminate distance education planning materials and other resources for use by existing and emerging networks as well as interested others.

WWLEARN was the recipient of a \$1.2 million cash grant from the Educational Telecommunications Board last fall. Since that time, significant progress has taken place. A Governing Board and Committee Structure has been established. Staff was hired. An RFP has been issued for network equipment, fiber-optic transportation and Internet access. A preliminary course list has been created and teachers have been recruited.

A considerable portion of this activity has been with the assistance and support of the Distance Education Consulting Services of the ECB. Could WWLEARN have come this far in so short a time without the help of the Distance Ed. staff at ECB? It is possible, but unlikely. Can we continue to develop our network without their support? Of course, but their assistance, advice and expertise would be greatly missed, and we would need to look elsewhere and possibly incur significant expense for comparable assistance.

Wisconsin was one of the first states in the country to effectively utilize distance education on a broad scale. Its continued success is due in great part to the continuity of service provided by the ECB and the experience of the distance education services consultants. These individuals have not only a wealth of professional expertise, but have sense of history of distance education in Wisconsin. While we all look to the future to attempt to determine where distance education can take the children of Wisconsin, only a knowledge of the past will provide the tools necessary to insure that future networks can link with existing networks; that emerging networks will have the support necessary to use limited funding wisely, and that all learners in Wisconsin will have access to an ever-growing base of knowledge.

On behalf of the WWLEARN network and the children and teachers it will serve, thank you for the opportunity to present this information.

## **TOWN LAWYER'S CONFERENCE**

**APRIL 25, 1997**

### **CURRENT PROBLEMS/PROPOSED CHANGES IN THE BOARD OF REVIEW**

**THOMAS W. HARNISCH  
ATTORNEY AT LAW**

#### **WISCONSIN TOWNS ASSOCIATION**

- I. Understanding types of Assessments
  - A. Utility Assessments Chapter 76
  - B. Manufacturing Property Assessments Chapter 70
  - C. Municipal Assessments Chapter 70
- II. Understanding Initial Appeals of Municipal Assessments
  - A. Appeal to Board of Review
    - 1. Exception in city of Milwaukee/Madison
  - \* B. Appeal to Circuit Court directly
    - 1. See S.C. Johnson and Son, Inc. vs Town of Caledonia  
206 W<sub>2</sub> 291 (1996)  
See 74.37(3)(d)
- III. Understanding Appeals from Municipal Board of Review Decision
  - \* A. Appeal to Department of Revenue (limited)
  - B. Appeal to Circuit Court
- IV. Understanding possible Municipal actions prior to Municipal Board of Review
  - A. Municipality appoints Board of Review Members
  - B. Municipality establishes salaries for Board of Review Members
  - \* C. Municipality may appoint Board of Review attorney
  - D. Municipality may establish hours for initial Board of Review
  - E. Municipality may establish new locations for Board of Review meetings
- V. Understanding possible civil and criminal liability for the Board of Review Members
  - A. Municipally should review law related to:
    - \* 1. Open meetings - AG Opinion 1976
    - \* 2. Open records
    - 3. Civil liability of municipality for improper actions of Board of Review members Berg E. Corp. v. Spencer Board of Review 53W<sub>2</sub> 233, 199NW<sub>2</sub> 892 (1971)
  - \* Abstract notes discussion items

- 4. Civil liability of assessor and Board or Review 70:503
- \* 5. Criminal liability for improper action of Board of Review  
members and assessors 70.501/70.502/946.60/946.12
- 6. Ethic Liability for improper actions of Board of Review  
Members and assessors 19.59

VI. Understanding initial Board of Review meeting responsibilities

- A. Determine quorum for Board of Review
- B. Receive legal advise from Board of Review attorney  
Guthrie v. WERC 111 W<sub>2</sub> 447 331 NW<sub>2</sub> 331 (1983)
- C. Determine proper notice of Board of Review meetings
- D. Elect officers for Board of Review and review roles of officers
- E. Review the role and duties of assessor before and after the Board of Review
- F. Receive the role and duties of objectors and witnesses at the Board of Review.
- G. Review the role of the quasi-judicial the hearing and decision timelines for the Board of Review
- H. Receive the certified roll and sworn statements from Clerk
- I. Examine the roll and correct errors in descriptions and computations .  
Add omitted or eliminate double assessed property.
- J. Review legal procedure for hearings
  - 1. Review and approve Assessor's affidavits/notices to taxpayers
  - 2. Review legal burden of proof by objector
  - 3. Understand presumption of assessor correctness Waste Management of Wisconsin Inc. vs Kenosha Count Board of Review 184 W<sub>2</sub> 541 516 NW<sub>2</sub> 695 (1994)
  - 4. Understand need for sworn testimony/order of witnesses
  - 5. Understand credible evidence/hearsay evidence
  - 6. Understand voting of Board of Review for each objector
  - 7. Review potential fraud/conflict of interest charges on Board of Review members
  - 8. Review and approve expenses of Board of Review
  - 9. Review legal scope of review by court Waste Management of Wisconsin Inc. vs Kenosha 184 W<sub>2</sub> 541 516 NW<sub>2</sub> 695 (1994)
- K. Review the specific objections received and specific objectors to be addressed
  - 1. Study the individual form of objectors and approve to content  
Bitters v. Town of Newbold 51W<sub>2</sub> 493, 187 NW<sub>2</sub> 339 (1971)
  - 2. Understand timeline for filing timely objection
  - 3. Approve Waiver of Notice of Objectors
  - 4. Establish order of objectors for public hearings



- L. Review the decision process for each objector
    - 1. Create order for decisions to be made by Board of Review
    - 2. Review evidence to be considered by Board of Review, including comparable sales and activated sales
    - 3. Establish timeline for final decisions by Board of Review
  - M. Schedule the objectors for hearing/subpoena witnesses, if necessary
  - N. Provide notice of hearing
  - O. Initial the quasi-judicial hearings
  - P. Schedule the final decision dates/make decisions executive final on each objector
  - Q. Schedule the termination date for Board of Review
  - R. Terminate Board of Review
  - S. Prepare for any appeals
- VII. Understanding the specific hearing process of the Board of Review
- A. Determine quorum of Board of Review and establish recordings of meeting Nekoosa Paper, Inc. v. Board of Review of Saratoga 114 W<sub>2</sub> 14 336 NW<sub>2</sub> 384 (1983)
  - B. Determine proper notice of Board of Review meeting
  - \* C. Review legal advise from Board of Review attorney
  - D. Review forms and determine proper objections and eligibility of objectors
  - \* E. Call eligible objectors and objector witnesses
  - \* F. Swear the witnesses
  - G. Receive objectors and objector witnesses testimony
  - H. Board of Review asks questions of objector and witnesses on the record, including comparative sales data and arms length sales data Doneff v. City of Two Rivers Board of Review 184 W<sub>2</sub> 203 516 NW<sub>2</sub> 383 (1994)
  - I. Call assessor for testimony
  - J. Swear assessor
  - K. Receive assessor testimony
  - \* L. Board of Review asks questions of assessor on the record
  - M. Objector asks questions of assessor Gregerson v. Board of Review of Town of Lincoln 5W<sub>2</sub> 28, 92 NW<sub>2</sub> 236 (1958)
  - N. Deliberate and decide proper assessment based on preponderance of best and credible evidence by motion and vote by majority of Board or Review NS Associates by JMB Group Trust IV v. Board of Review of Greendale 164 W<sub>2</sub> S1, 473 NW<sub>2</sub> 554 (App 1991)
  - O. Adjourn Board of Review hearing and make executive decision or decisions on objector claim or objectors claims
  - P. Present timely decision to objectors
  - Q. Present appeal rights to objectors
  - R. Prepare summary of proceedings

IX. Potential statutory changes

A. Taxpayer notification of change (LRB 2661)

1. Increases notice time between assessor's notification and Board of Review from 10 to 30 days

B. Board of Review procedures (LRB 2315/3)

1. Reserves the first meeting of the Board of Review for examination by taxpayers of the property tax roll and assessment data and for setting the Board of Review's agenda.
2. Requires 72-hour notice to persons who object to their assessments of the time when their hearing will be held unless the Board of Review and the objector waive that requirement.
3. Requires a 5-day interval between the Board of Review's first meeting and its first hearing of an objection.
4. Requires the assessor to provide the Board of Review with information about the validity of the assessment and with the information that he or she used.
5. Specifies that the assessors valuation is presumed to be correct.
6. Allows the Board of Review, for good cause, to allow hearings on objections that are made within 8 hours after the beginning of the first session.
7. Requires the Department of Revenue (DOR) to publish instructional material that provides information for persons who wish to object to valuations and requires DOR to distribute that material to municipalities.
8. Requires removal of a Board of Review member if a person, who is objector to an assessment requests the removal or if the member is biased, or has a conflict of interest, in regard to the objection.
9. Forbids objectors to contract, or provide information to members of the Board of Review the objection except at a hearing of the Board of Review.
10. Requires objectors to provide to the Board of Review a list of their witnesses, their attorneys' names, whether they will ask for removal of a Board of Review member, an estimate of the length of time that the hearing will take, their estimate of the value of their land and of their buildings and the information that they used to arrive at their estimates.
11. Requires a person who is objecting to an assessment that was made by the income method to provide to the assessor all of the information about income that the assessor requests.

12. Requires DOR to provide training and instructional materials for board of review members.
13. Specifies that the board may not lower an assessment if the objector presents no evidence.

Wisconsin State Legislature  
Joint Finance Committee  
Chippewa Valley Technical College  
620 West Clairemont Avenue  
Eau Claire, WI 54703

Tuesday, April 22, 1997

Sirs:

I am a resident of Eau Claire, Wisconsin. As a listener to Wisconsin Public Radio stations WHWC 88.3 FM in Eau Claire and WUEC 89.7 also in Eau Claire, I wish to express concern about Governor Thompson's proposed budget.

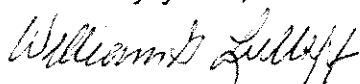
WHWC's talk radio format provides a source of news and information that is important to me as a state resident. WUEC broadcasts news and classical music. Wisconsin residents should have the opportunity to hear classical music as it is broadcast on WPR. This music format bolsters music education in Wisconsin. Wisconsin Public Radio is the only source of classical music in this area.

I urge you to change the currently proposed budget which will result in a 5 % cut in the UW Extension's budget thus causing a 12 % reduction in state support for WPR, or you might also exempt Wisconsin Public Radio from that reduction. Currently, Wisconsin Public Radio listeners provide nearly half of the total funding for WPR. Listener support is growing each year. Additional state support of WPR is warranted.

Please support full funding for the 4 % salary increases in the UW system, or, at minimum, provide the University the administrative flexibility to deal with any difference between the salary increases and the funding provided by the state.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,



William G. Luloff  
2022 Milton Road  
Eau Claire, WI 54703

April 13, 1997

To the Joint Finance Committee  
of the Wisconsin State Legislature

Wisconsin Public Radio is my constant companion through the day. As a former teacher now a senior citizen, I find Wisconsin Public Radio (WUEC 89.7) indispensable as a source of news, music and educational programs.

The Wisconsin Public Radio Association of which I am a member provides nearly one half of the total funding for the support of these programs. Most senior citizens are not able to increase their contributions.

The proposed 5% budget cut for the University of Wisconsin Extension will result in a 12% reduction for Wisconsin Public Radio which will seriously curtail what it can offer.

I respectfully request that your committee support the elimination of this budget cut or the exemption of public radio from any reduction in funding, so that this wonderful resource for the citizens of our state can continue.

Sincerely,

Doris K. Wilcox  
5998 Prill Rd.  
Eau Claire, WI 54701

221 S. 28th Avenue  
Wausau WI 54401

April 9, 1997

ATTENTION:  
Wisconsin State Legislative Joint Finance Committee Members

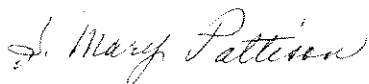
Dear friends,

It is my understanding that the proposed state budget will reduce funding for UW Extension by 5%, resulting in a 12% reduction in state support for Wisconsin Public Radio. As a faithful listener of many years (currently WHRM - Wausau) and a personal financial supporter of WPR, I find this proposed reduction very disturbing. Members of the Wisconsin Public Radio Association already provide nearly 50% of the total funding for WPR. Though that amount increases every year, state support is a NECESSITY.

We can be proud of WPR which provides music, information and rational discourse to all citizens of this state. For me, personally, it provides opportunities for good listening that are not otherwise available in this largely rural state. No doubt it is equally attractive to the many tourists who come here, especially to travelers as they journey to the recreational areas in northern Wisconsin.

Wisconsin Public Radio is a marvelous asset to this state. It would be most unfortunate if it were cut back to mediocre quality and service. I urge you to reduce or eliminate the 5% cut in UW Extension (which causes a 12% reduction in state support for WPR), or to exempt radio from that reduction.

Sincerely,



Sister Mary Pattison

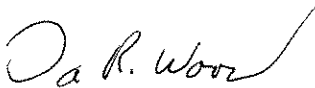
Date: April 13, 1997  
To: Wisconsin State Legislative Joint Finance Committee  
From: Dave Wood, 1806 State St., Eau Claire, WI 54701  
Re: Reduction in state support for Wisconsin Public Radio

Wisconsin Public Radio is a very valuable asset for the citizens of our state. Its thought-provoking talk shows, timely political analysis and informative programming make it a unique format for continuing education. My career is in sales traveling throughout the Upper Midwest and Canada. I view public radio as a convenient means of continuing my education in a format that is very enjoyable and accessible. Wisconsin Public Radio's quality of programming is far superior to other states in the Midwest or provinces in Canada. We have a unique treasure that is worthy of support.

Wisconsin's outstanding educational system is a proud tradition and our key to continued success, as a people, in the future. Wisconsin Public Radio is a very valuable and accessible component of our state's educational system.

I agree the costs of Wisconsin Public Radio should be shared between the state government and the listeners. Listener contributions now exceed state support. The state of Wisconsin needs to maintain its share of the costs. I think it is unfair for Wisconsin Public Radio's state support to be cut 12%. Wisconsin Public Radio is far more accessible to citizens than practically any other education medium. The value of Wisconsin Public Radio is as easy to tap as turning on your radio. Please reconsider your cuts in support for Wisconsin Public Radio.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dave Wood", written in dark ink.

Dave Wood

DATE: April 13, 1997  
TO: Members of the Wisconsin State Legislative Joint Finance Committee  
FROM: Becky Wood  
1806 State Street  
Eau Claire, WI 54701  
RE: Funding of Wisconsin Public Radio

*Rebecca L. Wood*

It is with great concern that I heard about the possibility of cuts to Wisconsin Public Radio's funding. Wisconsin Public Radio is incredibly valuable to me, and I do not want to see funding cuts affect the quality of WPR's programming.

I discovered Wisconsin Public Radio (WHWC) almost nine years ago just out of college when I traveled 30,000 business miles a year. It was (and is!) refreshing to hear intelligent conversation on such a wide variety of topics. I looked forward to long drives in the car because I knew there would be someone to keep me company (so to speak), and I knew I would not hear the same information (or lack thereof) that I hear on other stations. I always have been one who thirsts for knowledge and appreciates education. Wisconsin Public Radio has helped me to satisfy those needs. In my travels through other states I seek such a service and find none that compares with WPR.

Please exempt public radio from the Governor's 5% cut in UW Extension. As a firm believer in WPR's service I have been a volunteer and annual financial contributor for several years. I plan to continue my support, and I ask you to do the same.



**American Heart Association statement supporting \$.56 per pack cigarette fee increase  
Testimony to member of the Joint Committee on Finance (JCF)  
Chippewa Valley Technical College, Eau Claire  
Tuesday, April 22, 1997**

**Submitted by: Penny A. Hinz, Northwest Area Director for AHA of Wisconsin  
2000 Oxford Avenue Suite 2  
Eau Claire, WI 54703  
715-834-1108 (P)**

On behalf of the Chippewa Valley Division of the American Heart Association, I strongly urge you to consider including a substantial increase in the excise tax for tobacco in the budget. As the tobacco industry continues to target their promotional campaigns to youth, we must fight back by making access to cigarettes more difficult for minors. By substantially increasing the tobacco tax, we can do just that.

Research shows that a price increase of 10% in cigarettes can be expected to produce a decrease in consumption by youth of 10% or more. Children who smoke may not yet be addicted and they generally have less disposable income. A significant price increase in tobacco products will discourage kids from starting to smoke, while encouraging current smokers to quit or cut back.

Also, adults are not the ones who start smoking. Statistics show that almost 89% of adults who smoke began using cigarettes by or at age 18. If children can be dissuaded from smoking they almost always lose interest by the time they reach age 19. Substantially increasing the excise tax is just the dissuasion they may need.

Everyday in the United States, about 3,000 young people begin smoking. The average age children first start smoking is 14.5 years old. Of these 3,000 new smokers, we can expect that 30 will be murdered, 60 will die in traffic accidents and 1,000 will be killed from smoking.

An investment in a comprehensive tobacco prevention and education program will combat the \$100 million being spent by the tobacco industry in Wisconsin for the marketing and promotion of tobacco products. An educational campaign would teach children to make appropriate health choices.

**JEROME L. DACHEL**  
County Clerk  
(715) 726-7980  
FAX (715) 726-7987



**GEORGE C. MCDOWELL**  
County Auditor  
(715) 726-7946

711 N. Bridge Street  
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729-1876

**Rick Schafer, County Board Supervisor, Chippewa County**  
**Testimony to the Joint Committee on Finance**  
**April 22, 1997**

I would like to thank Chairmen Jensen, Burke, and the members of the Joint Committee on Finance for allowing me to testify today on the transportation needs of the Chippewa Valley.

On January 29th of this year, Governor Tommy Thompson gave his State of the State Address to the people of Wisconsin. In that speech he foresaw the Chippewa Valley becoming the Silicon Valley of the Midwest, as high tech computer jobs were replacing manufacturing jobs of the past. The only thing stopping this is the East Bridge Corridor Project.

The East Bridge Corridor would enhance economic development for the entire Chippewa Valley. One of the major restraints to economic development has been the constraint to move goods and services in and out of the industrial areas of the City of Chippewa Falls. The East Bridge Corridor would remove this restraint and link the two industrial parks with a direct route that does not go through the city's downtown. Additionally, large tracts of vacant land which lie at both ends of the project are considered prime development areas. Construction of the East Bridge will provide access to these tracts of land, creating significant economic development opportunities.

The East Bridge Corridor would also lead to residual economic development for the City of Eau Claire, villages like Cadott and Boyd, and towns like Hallie and Lafayette. These villages and towns are only a few of the many areas that will be affected by the East Bridge Corridor in the Chippewa Valley.

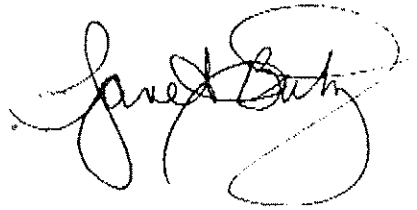
Perhaps the most important benefit of the East Bridge will be the improved safety response time. The new bridge would cut response time for transporting seriously ill and injured people to St. Joseph's Hospital in half. By allowing our emergency vehicles to

bypass the downtown area, we are giving people who are seriously injured faster emergency treatment that may in fact save their life.

Another item of concern that Chippewa County has is highway funding from the state. The state has put more of a burden on the counties and towns, which is fine. But without an increase in funding, we cannot maintain our roads and highways at the county level. This is why I support the Transportation Development Association's recommendations, which would raise the much needed revenues to address transportation problems. The TDA recommends a \$.03 per gallon increase in the gas tax, a \$10 increase in vehicle registration fees, and modifying the indexing formula by eliminating the consumption factor. This plan will bring nearly \$100 million in badly needed revenue to help maintain and repair our roads throughout the state. This plan is being supported by the Wisconsin Counties Association and the Wisconsin County Highway Association.

In closing, I would like to thank all the members of the Joint Committee on Finance for taking the time to hear the transportation funding concerns that we in Chippewa County have.

**STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF \$.56  
PER PACK CIGARETTE FEE INCREASE**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janet Butz", with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Dear Committee Members:

As I'm sure you are aware, Wisconsin's youth are in danger. After years of targeted marketing strategies, 37% of Wisconsin children currently smoke. This does not bode well for the future of our state and nation. The detrimental long term effects of smoking are well documented, and we need to support any legislation that works toward protection of the health and well being of children today.

A \$.56 per pack increase is such legislation. It is believed that a substantial tax increase would prevent an equally substantial number of kids from starting smoking. Not only would it prevent new smokers, it would also aid in cessation if the revenue from the increase were used for education and health initiatives.

This bill is a wise decision for the long term health of our state. Please vote in support of it.

Janet Butz  
2427 Hillcrest Parkway  
Altoona. Wi. 54720

April 18, 1997

Dear Legislators:

I am writing to urge your support for a \$.56 tax increase on all products containing tobacco. There are several reasons why I believe you should support this tax increase. First, it has been shown in numerous studies that an increase in tobacco tax results in a decrease in tobacco consumption, especially among children. Tobacco use is the number one preventable cause of death in this country, and as elected officials you have an obligation to do whatever you can to protect and promote the health of the public. Increasing the tax on tobacco would go a long way in reducing the consumption of cigarettes and smokeless tobacco and preventing new smokers (nearly all of whom are under 18) from starting.

Secondly, increasing a tax on tobacco and diverting some of the revenue to prevention would help combat the barrage of tobacco industry advertising which on a daily basis targets children. The tobacco industry needs to recruit new smokers to replace those who either quit or die from tobacco related illnesses. Children are the target for tobacco advertising since studies have shown that the majority of new smokers start before they are 18 years old. Anti-smoking television ads in California were very effective in revealing the motives of the tobacco industry.

Lastly, I believe that as elected officials you have the responsibility to decrease the fiscal burden on Wisconsin from tobacco use which stands at nearly \$113 million annually in Medicaid costs alone.

I would also urge your support for the other proposals which address the tobacco issue: a ban on preemption; restricting tobacco sales to minors; and prohibiting outdoor advertising of tobacco products.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Devora Lomas  
1427 Kane St.  
La Crosse WI 54603

April 20, 1997

Michael R. Weil  
3447 Jill Avenue  
Eau Claire, WI 54701

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Finance:

I would like to take this opportunity to indicate my **SUPPORT FOR THE \$.56 PER PACK CIGARETTE FEE INCREASE.**

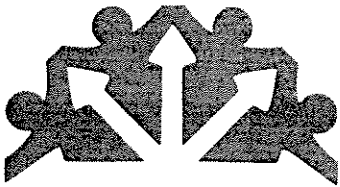
As I am sure you know, smoking costs the state of Wisconsin an enormous amount of money each year in additional health care expenses as well as time lost by workers due to health related illnesses. Nothing else in our society injures, induces health problems and kills like tobacco. It is time that smokers bear the burden of these costs, rather than the public as a whole.

More importantly yet, it is well documented that an increase in the cost of cigarettes is a strong disincentive to our youth to start smoking.

With smoking related issues in the news so often today, this is a golden opportunity for the State of Wisconsin to be in the vanguard of those who wish to see a decrease in illnesses and deaths due to this drug. Please vote to increase the fee by \$.56 per pack while at the same time saving the state vast sums of money and **SAFEGUARDING OUR YOUTH!**

Thank you in advance for considering this very important initiative.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Michael R. Weil". The signature is written in dark ink and is located at the bottom left of the page.



## Council on Alcohol & Other Drug Abuse, Inc.

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April 18, 1997

To: The Joint Committee on Finance

From: Betty Kleemeier  
Executive Director  
Council on Alcohol & Other Drug Abuse, Inc.

"I support a substantial increase in the cigarette excise tax; a minimum increase of \$.56 per pack and preferably higher."

Wisconsin must respond to the alarming rise in the number of youth who are beginning to smoke. 1996 figures from the university of Michigan's "Monitoring the Future" study indicate that over the past five years, smoking has risen by 50% among 8th graders (from 14% to 21%) and tenth graders (from 21% to 30%). Smoking by 12th graders is up 20% during this period.

A 1996 Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey notes that for the first time in recent history, Wisconsin kids smoke more than other U.S. kids. In 1996, 37% of Wisconsin kids grades 9 - 12 were identified as current smokers.

This is very directly related to efforts by the tobacco industry to entice young smokers. After two decades of a marked increase in adult smoking, we are again faced with the cost to society of nicotine addiction of an increasing number of our population. A state which is concerned about public health of both adults and youth should respond with determination to reverse this trend.

(Continued)

404 1/2 N. Bridge St. (P.O. Box 4) ♦ Chippewa Falls, WI 54729 ♦ (715) 723-1101

Contracting Agency with Chippewa County Human Services  
Cooperating Agency with the United Way and Rutledge Charities

Page 2

We know that tobacco tax increases result in increased revenue and reduced consumption.

Wisconsin must learn from the experiences of other states, and realize that anything less than the proposed \$.56 per Pack will not accomplish the impact needed to intervene in this health threat to our youth.

In addition, a substantial portion of funds raised from an increase in the per pack fee must be designated for prevention, education, and cessation programs.

I urge your consideration of these facts.



**Joint Finance Committee Hearing**

Eau Claire, Wis.; Tuesday, April 22, 1997

From: Carol Banks  
121 3rd St. West  
Menomonie, WI 5451  
(715) 235-5718

To Joint Finance Committee Chairs and Members:

As a person with a disability and one who has experienced nursing home and home health care in the past two years, I have some concerns about the issue of living with a disability and the need for adequate personal care, and living in our communities.

I just heard about the group called ADAPT staging a protest in Madison because of Governor Tommy Thompson's proposed hike in the nursing home part of the state budget. And, I am wondering how much will the Community Options Program get, and is it an adequate amount? We haven't been able to hear about this news any earlier, so I was glad to hear this in whatever way it should come to us. ADAPT, even though it is radical in its approach, is effective in keeping the Community Promise alive in everyone's minds, which is where IT MUST BE.

The fight to keep ourselves in the community, for those who are disabled to the point of needing personal care and housekeeping assistance, seems to be an ongoing and often frustrating one. It is a constant struggle as long as we hold onto the medical model which keeps treating people with disabilities as if they're in constant need of medical care, and thus they are considered as patients all the time. Those of us who are disabled don't consider ourselves in the need of a doctor's constant supervision, we just need to live in the community and be able to contribute in whatever way possible just like any other individual. The other thing you must remember is that most of us who have disabilities and are in need of personal care are in their 20's, 30's, 40's--in the prime of their lives.

And, while we have the Community Options Program available to us, especially for individuals with severe disabilities, the question is--where will a person get adequate care? I have experienced the kind of care that is available through home health care agencies, and they are far from adequate. And, the limited choices that social service agencies and home health care agencies give us usually means that the individual with the disability has little or no control in his or her situation. The people that are hired by many of these home health care agencies are often low-skilled and have little understanding of the individual's needs, especially because the workers are scheduled to run from one home to another; there also have been reports of people who are abusive and other inadequacies in the kind of care that is delivered.

People with disabilities deserve to have their place in the community without having to worry about the threat of having to go into a nursing home because of the lack of funding or the lack of adequate workers to assist them to stay in the community and in their homes. We need to go back to giving more control to these individuals to hire their own personal care attendants. There is also a need for some mechanisms to fall into place that when regular personal care attendants aren't able to be there, that there are substitutions available, such as a registry of attendants to call on. We must look at ways this can be accomplished in rural areas, such as we have in the State of Wisconsin and elsewhere, perhaps calling certain individuals from churches or elsewhere, to use as paid attendants and as volunteers when the regular attendants aren't available; in other words, we need to find people from places that are reliable and trustworthy sources.

I'm trying to look at the issue in all ways so that someone else doesn't say that it can't be done. We all need to live in the community with dignity, with the ability to contribute, each person in his or her own way. You put people into nursing homes, and this will not happen.

Also, from what I've heard, the managed care system is not going to work much better than what I've heard about HMO's. In some states, where there is good input and participation from constituents, there is some real hope, but in others, there have been some real disasters, and a lot of fear. Personal care will still be given the medical approach rather than looking at it as an essential part of anyone's independent living.

Think of this--what would it be like if the person we were talking about was your sister, daughter, son, or even your mother. Would you want that person living in a nursing home, or at home and able to still participate in the family system with a little help from a personal care attendant? The group ADAPT may be the most visible thing you'll see, but they represent a lot of people around our country who deserve to live in our communities. Please give them that chance. ADAPT won't go away, and the rest of us won't either.

**JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE TESTIMONY  
REGARDING 1997-99 BIENNIAL BUDGET (SB 77/AB 100)  
WISCONSIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM PROVISIONS  
BY  
STEVE HOLDEN, WEAC BOARD OF DIRECTOR  
TUESDAY, APRIL 22, 1997**

MY NAME IS STEVE HOLDEN. I AM A MEMBER OF THE WEAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND A MEMBER OF THE WEAC WTCS COMMITTEE. I WOULD LIKE TO THANK CHAIRPERSONS BURKE AND JENSEN OF THE JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK TODAY ON THE WISCONSIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM PROVISIONS OF THE 1997-99 BIENNIAL BUDGET.

**WTCS GENERAL STATE AID:**

GOVERNOR THOMPSON'S 1997 BUDGET BILL (SB 77/AB 100) PROPOSES TO INCREASE THE WISCONSIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM BUDGET 1% ANNUALLY. THE WISCONSIN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION COUNCIL AND THE WISCONSIN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS SUPPORT INCREASING THE WISCONSIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM BUDGET TO 2.5% ANNUALLY.

GENERAL AID, WHICH SUPPORTS ABOUT 25% OF WTCS DISTRICT AIDABLE COSTS, HAS REMAINED AT \$110.2 MILLION GPR PER YEAR FOR THE LAST THREE FISCAL YEARS.

FROZEN STATE AIDS HAVE PLACED EXTRA PRESSURE ON THE PROPERTY TAX. STATEWIDE, THE WTCS LEVY INCREASED BY APPROXIMATELY \$20

MILLION (OR 6%) PER YEAR IN THE 1995-97 BIENNIUM. HOWEVER, THE ANNUAL INCREASE IN WTCS OPERATING BUDGETS HAS BEEN BELOW 5%.

THE STATE RELIES UPON THE WTCS TO MEET THE INCREASING DEMAND FOR SKILLED, WELL-EDUCATED WORKERS WHOSE EMPLOYMENT HELPS FUEL THE STATE'S ECONOMY. THE WTCS ALSO RESPONDS TO SPECIFIC REQUESTS FROM BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY FOR RETRAINING, UPGRADING, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND INITIAL JOB TRAINING.

THE WTCS HAS BECOME THE PRIMARY PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF THE ACADEMICALLY DISADVANTAGED, THE ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED, THE DISABLED, DISPLACED HOMEMAKERS AND OTHER SPECIAL POPULATIONS. MOREOVER, THERE WILL BE PRESSURE TO EXPAND BASIC EDUCATION/LITERACY TRAINING AND EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS FOR W-2 CLIENTS.

WHILE WTCS DISTRICTS HAVE IMPLEMENTED NUMEROUS ECONOMIZING MEASURES (SUCH AS SHARED INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND COOPERATIVE PURCHASING), THE COST OF PROVIDING NEEDED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES WILL CONTINUE TO INCREASE SYSTEM WIDE BY APPROXIMATELY 4.5% ANNUALLY. THEREFORE, NO GROWTH IN GENERAL AIDS IN 1995-97 FOLLOWED BY 1% INCREASES FOR 1997-99 WILL CAUSE THE STATE'S SUPPORT LEVEL TO DIMINISH SIGNIFICANTLY. SUCH A DECLINE LEADS TO CONCERNS REGARDING THE STATE'S LONG-TERM ROLE IN SUPPORTING THE SYSTEM.

A GENERAL AID INCREASE BEYOND THE 1% LEVEL WOULD REDUCE THE

SYSTEM'S NEED TO OFFSET PART OF THEIR REVENUE REQUIREMENTS THROUGH THE PROPERTY TAX.

INCREASED STATE AID WOULD ALLOW WTCS DISTRICTS TO UNDERTAKE NEW INITIATIVES IN AREAS SUCH AS INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY, STAFF TRAINING, CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND SCHOOL-TO-WORK EXPANSION. AT THE PROPOSED 1% LEVEL, IT IS MUCH MORE LIKELY THAT SUCH INITIATIVES WOULD EITHER NOT OCCUR OR THEY WOULD BE FUNDED AT THE EXPENSE OF OTHER SERVICES OR TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES.

THE WTCS HAS PROVEN TO BE RESPONSIVE TO COMMUNITY NEEDS AND OFFERS A FLEXIBLE PROGRAM TO STUDENTS.

**YOUTH OPTIONS PROGRAM:**

THE TECHNICAL COLLEGE YOUTH OPTION PROPOSAL CAN CREATE A NEW EDUCATIONAL AVENUE FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO WANT TO GAIN TECHNICAL SKILLS AND ADVANCE THEIR EDUCATIONAL STATUS WHILE EARNING THEIR HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA. THIS CAN TRULY CREATE A WIN - WIN SITUATION FOR STUDENTS WHO WISH TO ATTEND A TECHNICAL COLLEGE DURING THEIR LAST TWO YEARS OF HIGH SCHOOL.

IN ADDITION, THE YOUTH OPTION PROPOSAL CAN EXPAND THE WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOLS AND TECHNICAL COLLEGES THAT ALREADY EXISTS BECAUSE OF SCHOOL-TO-WORK, AT-RISK, AND OTHER ADVANCE STANDING PROGRAMS. HIGH SCHOOLS WILL BE ABLE TO ENHANCE THEIR EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS TO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO WILL BE

ABLE TO CONTINUE IN TECHNICAL COLLEGE PROGRAMS WHEN THEY GRADUATE FROM THE HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM. THEREFORE, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE DETAILS OF THE YOUTH OPTION PROPOSAL BE EXAMINED CAREFULLY SO THAT THIS CAN BE A TRULY WINNING PARTNERSHIP FOR WISCONSIN TECHNICAL COLLEGES, HIGH SCHOOLS, AND STUDENTS.

THIS PROPOSAL SHOULD NOT IMPOSE COSTS UNFAIRLY ON SCHOOLS OR THE STUDENTS. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THIS BE COST-NEUTRAL FOR THE HIGH SCHOOLS, TECHNICAL COLLEGES, AND STUDENTS. THE OVER-RIDING MOTIVATION MUST BE WHETHER THIS IS A GOOD OPTION FOR THE STUDENT AND NOT THE FISCAL IMPACT ON EITHER THE SCHOOLS OR THE STUDENT. THEREFORE, SOME OF THE ISSUES TO CONSIDERED ARE:

- ☐ THE FISCAL IMPACT ON HIGH SCHOOLS THAT HAVE LIMITED FLEXIBILITY TO PAY INSTRUCTIONAL COSTS AND SUPPLEMENTAL CHARGES TO TECHNICAL COLLEGES BECAUSE OF REVENUE CAPS.
- ☐ THE FISCAL IMPACT ON TECHNICAL COLLEGES THAT MAY NEED TO PROVIDE MANDATED EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND OTHER SERVICES TO HIGH SCHOOLS STUDENTS. THE SUPPLEMENTAL CHARGE FOR EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS MAY NOT BE SUFFICIENT TO PROVIDE THE SERVICE, WHILE THE HIGH SCHOOL MAY NEED TO CONTINUE THE SAME LEVEL OF SERVICES FOR OTHER STUDENTS.
- ☐ THE IMPACT ON STUDENTS FOR TRANSPORTATION, TOOLS, DAILY EXPENSES, AND EDUCATIONAL COSTS NOT INCLUDED IN THE TUITION AND FEES.
- ☐ THE ISSUE OF ACCESS FOR STUDENTS IN RURAL AREAS PARTICULARLY WHERE THE TECHNICAL COLLEGE CAMPUS IS A CONSIDERABLE DISTANCE AWAY FROM THE HIGH SCHOOL. DISTANCE LEARNING NETWORKS CANNOT PROVIDE COMPLETE ACCESS ESPECIALLY WITH REGARD TO VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL "HANDS ON" EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES.

- THE IMPACT OF DPI LICENSURE AND BACKGROUND CHECKS THAT DIFFERS FROM TECHNICAL COLLEGE CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.
- THE IMPACT ON TECHNICAL COLLEGES TO MEET COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE, PRIVACY LAWS, MANDATES, AND SERVICES THAT APPLY TO MINORS THAT DO NOT APPLY TO THEIR ADULT TECHNICAL COLLEGE STUDENTS.
- THE IMPACT ON THE STAFF DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF TECHNICAL COLLEGE FACULTY TO HELP THEM MEET THE MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS.

TO BE A SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM, THE EDUCATIONAL DECISION REGARDING WHETHER THE TECHNICAL COLLEGE YOUTH OPTION IS A GOOD DECISION FOR A STUDENT SHOULD NOT BE DRIVEN BY FINANCIAL OR OTHER BURDENS ON THE STUDENTS OR THE SCHOOLS. IT MUST BE A DECISION DRIVEN BY "IS THIS GOOD FOR THE STUDENT?"

#### **SCHOOL-TO-WORK:**

THE SCHOOL TO WORK PROGRAM PROVIDES VALUABLE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AND OPTIONS FOR STUDENTS TO LEARN IN VARIOUS FORMATS AND THROUGH A WIDE VARIETY OF COORDINATED SCHOOL-BASED AND WORK-BASED ACTIVITIES. SCHOOL-TO-WORK- IS, AND MUST CONTINUE TO BE VIEWED, AS AN EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR THE BENEFIT OF STUDENTS, NOT AS A WORK PROGRAM.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF SCHOOL-TO-WORK SHOULD REMAIN HOUSED IN THE STATE'S EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES, THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION AND THE WISCONSIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM, NOT

TRANSFERRED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT.

**WTCS AND W2:**

WEAC/WFT SUPPORT CHANGES TO THE CURRENT WELFARE REFORM LAW (W-2) TO CONTAIN THE FOLLOWING EDUCATIONAL COMPONENT:

- EACH PERSON ENROLLED IN SCHOOL SHALL RECEIVE CREDIT TOWARD MEETING THE FULL WORK REQUIREMENT OF THE W-2 LAW BASED ON THE CRITERIA THAT EVERY CLASS HOUR PLUS TWO (2) HOURS OF STUDY TIME FOR EACH CLASS HOUR WILL BE CREDITED AS THREE (3) HOURS TOWARD MEETING THE FULL WORK REQUIREMENT.

MANY OF THE PEOPLE RECEIVING WELFARE BENEFITS NEED EDUCATION AND TRAINING TO PROVIDE THEM WITH THE NECESSARY SKILLS TO BECOME SELF-SUFFICIENT, PRODUCTIVE, CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS OF SOCIETY ON A LONG-TERM BASIS. THE WTCS SYSTEM WAS ESTABLISHED AND IS IN THE BEST POSITION TO PROVIDE SUCH EDUCATION AND TRAINING. IT IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY TO HAVE A SKILLED WORK FORCE. PLACING WELFARE RECIPIENTS INTO LOW SKILL, LOW WAGE JOBS IS NOT THE ANSWER. INSTEAD, WE NEED TO SUPPORT TRAINING FOR EMPLOYMENT.

AGAIN, THANK YOU CHAIRPERSONS AND MEMBERS OF THE JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO APPEAR BEFORE YOU TODAY TO DISCUSS THE WISCONSIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM PROVISIONS IN THE BIENNIAL BUDGET.



CHIPPEWA FALLS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY  
JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE  
APRIL 22, 1997

GOOD MORNING AND THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON AN ISSUE THAT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO THE CITY OF CHIPPEWA FALLS AND THE ENTIRE STATE OF WISCONSIN.

AS NOTED I AM JAYSON SMITH AND I AM THE CITY PLANNER IN CHIPPEWA FALLS AND I STAFF THE CHIPPEWA FALLS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION WHO I AM HERE REPRESENTING TODAY.

AS I AM SURE THAT MOST OF YOU ARE AWARE WE HAVE A MAJOR TRANSPORTATION PROJECT IN CHIPPEWA FALLS KNOWN AS THE EAST BRIDGE CORRIDOR.

I WILL NOT GO INTO A LOT OF DETAIL ABOUT THE PROJECT ITSELF BECAUSE MOST OF YOU ARE PROBABLY ALREADY AWARE OF THE DETAILS AND I WANT TO FOCUS MY REMARKS TOWARDS TRANSPORTATION FUNDING.

I WILL LEAVE A PROJECT STATUS REPORT WITH YOU FOR THE RECORD.

BRIEFLY, THE EAST BRIDGE CORRIDOR IS LOCATED ON THE EAST SIDE OF CHIPPEWA FALLS. WHEN COMPLETE IT WILL BE LOCATED BETWEEN CTH "J" ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE CHIPPEWA RIVER AND CTH "I" ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE RIVER.

PROJECT FUNDING FALLS UNDER WISCONSIN STATE STATUTE 84.11 LOCAL HIGH COST BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION AND RECONSTRUCTION WHEREBY THE STATE SHARE OF COST IS 75% AND THE LOCAL SHARE IS 25%. THE CITY PETITIONED FOR FUNDING UNDER SS 84.11 IN EARLY 1993. FOLLOWING AN INVESTIGATION BY THE DOT, A DETERMINATION WAS MADE THAT THE EAST BRIDGE PROJECT MET

THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND ALL PARTIES WERE SO NOTIFIED.

THE CITY OF CHIPPEWA FALLS, AT A COST OF \$352,000, PREPARED AN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROJECT. A FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WAS ISSUED IN DECEMBER, 1996.

FOLLOWING THAT FINDING, THE CITY AND CHIPPEWA COUNTY JOINTLY CONTRACTED WITH A CONSULTANT TO COMPLETE THE ENGINEERING AND DESIGN PHASE OF THE PROJECT. THIS CONTRACT AMOUNTS TO AN ADDITIONAL \$552,000 OF LOCAL COMMITMENT. THIS PHASE WILL BE COMPLETE AND THE PROJECT WILL BE READY TO BID IN LATE 1998.

BOTH THE CITY OF CHIPPEWA FALLS AND CHIPPEWA COUNTY HAVE ADOPTED RESOLUTIONS COMMITTING THEIR RESPECTIVE 12.5% SHARE OF PROJECT COSTS.

THE ONE AND ONLY PIECE OF THE PROJECT THAT IS MISSING IS FOR THE STATE TO APPROPRIATE ITS 75% SHARE OF PROJECT COSTS AS PROVIDED FOR UNDER STATE STATUTE 84.11.

NO FUNDING IS REQUESTED FOR THE 84.11 PROGRAM UNDER THE DOT'S AND GOVERNOR'S BUDGET.

I AM NOT HERE TODAY TO DISCUSS AND JUSTIFY THE POSITIVE MERITS OF THE EAST BRIDGE PROJECT.

QUITE FRANKLY, I HAVE NOT SPOKE TO ANYONE ABOUT THIS PROJECT THAT HAS NOT AGREED THAT THE PROJECT IS NEEDED AND THAT THE BENEFITS WILL FAR EXCEED THE COSTS.

THE PROJECT ENJOYS STRONG, UNIFIED AREA WIDE SUPPORT - SOME OF WHICH MANY OF YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED FIRST HAND THROUGH LETTERS SENT FROM MANY LOCAL BUSINESSES AND ORGANIZATIONS, THE CHIPPEWA VALLEY RALLY, AND THROUGH OUR OWN LOCAL LEGISLATOR'S HARD WORK.

SO WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

IT APPEARS THAT THE COST OF STATE-WIDE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM MAINTENANCE AND REHABILITATION, AND THE COST OF NEW DESIRED PROJECTS **EXCEED** CURRENT REVENUE FUNDING LEVELS.

THIS IS NOT UNUSUAL WHEN DEVELOPING BUDGETS. NEEDS AND WANTS OFTEN EXCEED AVAILABLE RESOURCES.

THIS PARTICULAR PROBLEM, HOWEVER, HAS SOME SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE STATE'S TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM, NOT TO MENTION THE EAST BRIDGE PROJECT IN CHIPPEWA FALLS.

THE TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION ANALYSIS OF THE 1995-1997 AND 1997-1999 WIDOT BUDGETS INDICATE THAT FUNDING IS INADEQUATE AND THAT AS A RESULT THE BUDGET PROPOSALS REPRESENT A FURTHER FALLING BEHIND IN MEETING DOCUMENTED TRANSPORTATION NEEDS.

IT APPEARS , THAT CURRENT DOT FUNDING LEVELS ARE NOT EVEN ADEQUATE TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING STATE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM - LET ALONE IMPROVE AND EXPAND IT, INCLUDING FUNDING FOR THE EAST BRIDGE PROJECT.

AN AUDIT OF THE DOT, CONDUCTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE AUDIT BUREAU, FOUND NO MAJOR INEFFICIENCIES IN THE DOT THAT WOULD PROVIDE MONIES FOR PROJECTS, AND THE AUDIT ACKNOWLEDGES THE FACT THAT MORE FUNDING IS NEEDED.

GOVERNOR THOMPSON PROPOSED AN INCREASE IN DOT REVENUE IN THE 1995-1997 DOT BUDGET AND HAS INDICATED THAT, WHILE HE WILL NOT PROPOSE ANOTHER INCREASE IN THE 1997-1999 BUDGET, HE WILL SUPPORT AN INITIATIVE THAT DOES.

THE TDA, THE LEGISLATIVE AUDIT BUREAU, AND THE GOVERNOR HAVE ALL INDICATED THAT DOT REVENUES NEED TO BE INCREASED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE STATE'S TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.

IT IS EVIDENT WHY THE EAST BRIDGE CORRIDOR PROJECT IN

CHIPPEWA FALLS, AND THE TWO OTHER HIGH COST LOCAL BRIDGE PROJECTS IN THE STATE, ARE NOT INCLUDED IN THE PROPOSED DOT BUDGET.

FUNDING IS NOT AVAILABLE UNDER CURRENT REVENUE LEVELS. AS I STATED EARLIER, THE EAST BRIDGE FUNDING FALLS UNDER STATE STATUTE 84.11. STATE STATUTE 84.11 PROVIDES STATE FUNDING FOR ELIGIBLE HIGH COST LOCAL BRIDGES.

THE CITY OF CHIPPEWA FALLS AND CHIPPEWA COUNTY HAVE FOLLOWED THE REQUIREMENTS OF THAT LAW. THE EAST BRIDGE PROJECT HAS RECEIVED A DETERMINATION THAT IT MEETS THE CRITERIA FOR FUNDING UNDER THE STATUTE.

HOWEVER, IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT THE EAST BRIDGE CORRIDOR PROJECT IS NOT GOING TO BE FUNDED UNLESS THE REVENUE NEEDS OF THE STATE WIDE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM ARE ALSO ADDRESSED.

ON BEHALF OF THE CHIPPEWA FALLS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION I AM HERE TO EXTEND OUR SUPPORT FOR THE STATE TO INCREASE DOT REVENUES.

THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS ADOPTED A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION RECOMMENDED DOT FUNDING INCREASES AT ITS APRIL 21 BOARD MEETING HELD YESTERDAY.

SPECIFICALLY, THE RESOLUTION STATES THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CHIPPEWA FALLS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION HEREBY EXPRESSES ITS SUPPORT FOR THE TRANSPORTATION REVENUE PACKAGE PROPOSED BY THE TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION TO ENABLE FUNDING OF THE EAST BRIDGE CORRIDOR IN THIS 1997-1999 BIENNIAL BUDGET.

I HAVE A COPY OF THE RESOLUTION FOR THE RECORD. I WILL ALSO

LEAVE A COPY OF MY REMARKS.

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT.

PRESENTED BY:

JAYSON C. SMITH

SECRETARY, CHIPPEWA FALLS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

EAST BRIDGE CORRIDOR

STATUS REPORT

CHIPPEWA FALLS, WISCONSIN

## EAST BRIDGE AND CONNECTING STREETS CORRIDOR

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- The project purpose is to improve the safety and efficiency of the existing transportation network in the Chippewa Falls Urban Area by constructing a new bridge crossing the Chippewa River (see attached location map).
- **Project Boundaries:** The total project boundaries encompass a new arterial street that is located on the east side of Chippewa Falls between STH 29 (direct connection to the STH 29 Bypass interchange) and STH 178.
- **First Phase:** This phase involves construction of a 4-lane divided urban boulevard, including a new bridge over the river and a new bridge over the Wisconsin Central Railroad, that begins on the south side of the river at CTH J and ends on the north side of the river at CTH I.
- **Second Phase:** This phase of the project is located between STH 29 and CTH J and will connect the East Bridge (First Phase) with the new east interchange for the STH 29 Bypass. This phase of the project is planned for construction at the same time that the STH 29 Bypass is being built - 2000/2001.
- **Third Phase:** This phase of the project is located between CTH I and STH 178. This phase of the project will be constructed as the County Farm land develops north of CTH I.

### FUNDING

- **First Phase:** CTH J to CTH I - Approximate cost \$9,000,000. The State's share is 75%, the City of Chippewa Falls' share is 12.5%, and Chippewa County's share is 12.5%. The City and the County, by resolution, are committed to their respective shares of the project costs. The State has not appropriated its share of funding. Project construction is **dependent** on the State Legislature to include the East Bridge project in the WIDOT budget. See Timetable below.
- **Second Phase:** The City proposes to bond for this phase of the project in 2000.
- **Third Phase:** Local expense. Construction timetable dependent on demand.

### TIMETABLE

- **Environmental Assessment:** A "Finding of No Significant Impact" for the preferred corridor, as described for the **First Phase** of the project, was issued in December 1996. The City and County are proceeding to the preliminary engineering and final design phase of the project. Cost of the environmental assessment exceeded \$350,000. Cost responsibility-City of Chippewa Falls.

- **Preliminary Engineering/Final Design:** A contract has been executed between the City, County, and Short Elliot Hendrickson Inc. for the preliminary engineering and final design phase of the project. The completion date is November 1998. Approximate cost-\$552,000. Cost responsibility: State - 75%, City - 12.5%, County - 12.5%. However, the State has not appropriated its share of project funds. Therefore, the City and County have agreed to front end the \$552,000 to maintain the project schedule with an expectation that there will be a state reimbursement of their share.
- **Project Construction:** The objective and timetable of the City and County are to begin construction of the **First Phase** in May 1999. Project construction is **totally dependent** on the State Legislature appropriating its share of project costs in the upcoming 1997-1999 Wisconsin Transportation Budget which will be part of the State budget now being formulated by Governor Thompson for presentation to the Legislature in January 1997.

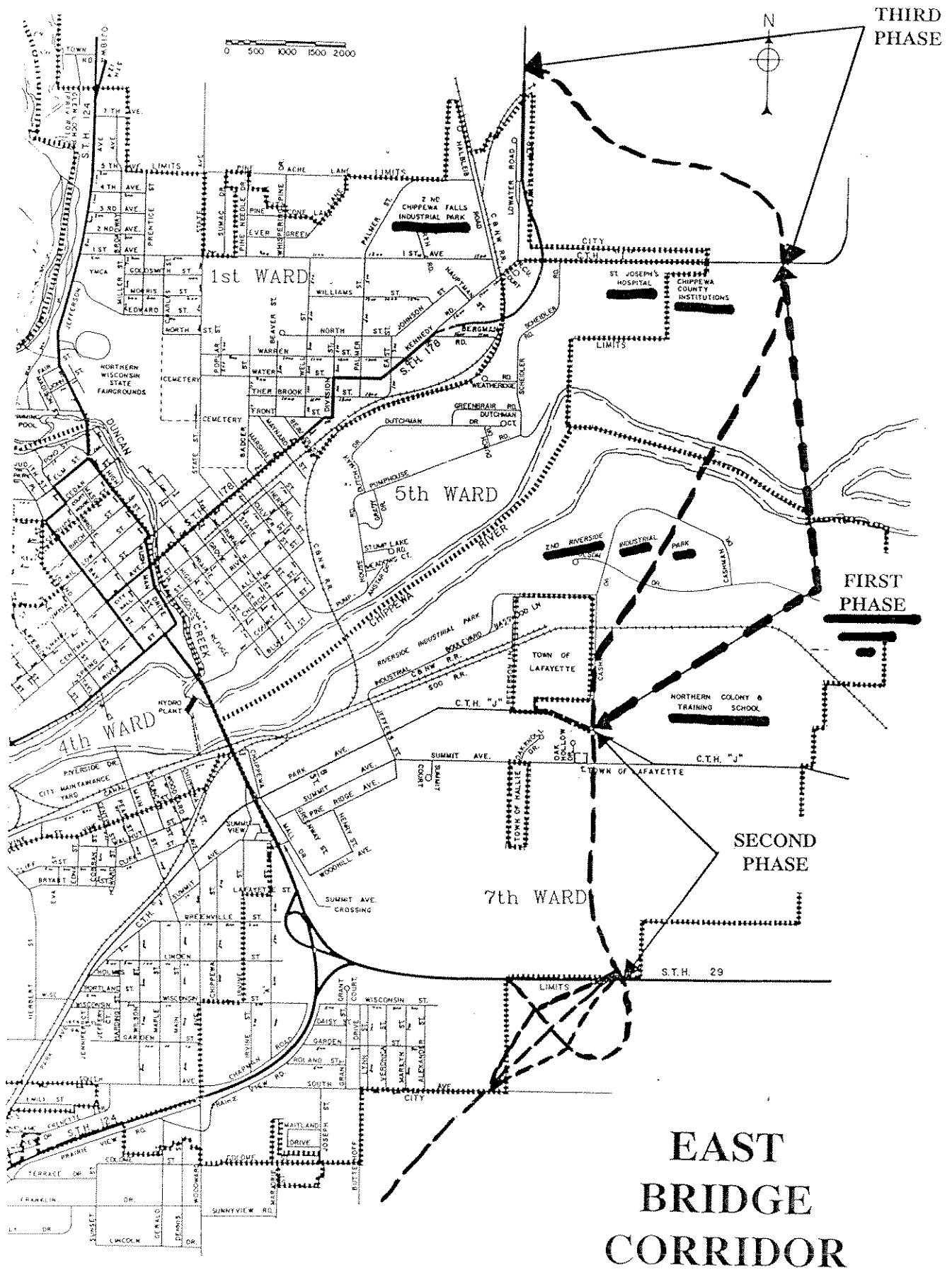
**THE CURRENT PROPOSED STATE BUDGET DOES NOT INCLUDE FUNDING FOR THE FIRST PHASE OF THE EAST BRIDGE CORRIDOR. IF THE BUDGET IS NOT AMENDED TO INCLUDE THE STATE'S SHARE OF FUNDING FOR THE PROJECT, CONSTRUCTION WILL BE DELAYED FOR A MINIMUM OF TWO YEARS ( 2000-2002 BUDGET).**

#### **PROJECT BENEFITS**

- Improve the safety and efficiency of the existing community transportation network. The East Bridge Corridor project will significantly reduce traffic volumes (congestion) in the downtown and streets leading to and from the industrial parks, thereby, improving safety and travel time.
- Significantly enhance the movement of goods and services by linking the two industrial parks with a more direct route that does not have to go through the City's downtown. Completion of the project will provide better access to the state and interstate highway system. When the first and second phases of the project are completed between STH 29 and CTH I, there will be a direct connection to the STH 29 "east interchange."
- Provide safer, more efficient access to and from places of work for area employees.
- At both ends of the project lie large tracts of vacant land. Each of these tracts of land is owned by a single property owner (Chippewa County to the north, approximately 400 acres of land, and the Northern Center/State to the south, approximately 250 acres of land). These tracts of land are considered prime development areas. Construction of the East Bridge Corridor will provide access to these tracts of land creating significant economic development opportunities.
- Greatly improved access to the hospital, clinics, and other medical facilities that are located on the northeast side of Chippewa Falls. Improved access will not only be better for clients and employees, but will significantly reduce emergency response times.



# CHIPPEWA FALLS, WISCONSIN



# CHIPPEWA FALLS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

*Resolution Regarding Adequate Funding in the Proposed WisDOT 1997-1999 Biennial Budget*

WHEREAS, the 1995-1997 Biennial Transportation budget as passed by the legislature and signed by the Governor did not adequately provide for long term State and Local Transportation needs; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's 1997-1999 Biennial Transportation Budget, as presented to the legislature, contains no provisions for additional revenues for transportation programs; and

WHEREAS, the current proposed transportation budget and the previous transportation budget did not provide the funding needed to keep our transportation system in good working condition and fund needed improvements; and

WHEREAS, our area businesses depend on a reliable and efficient transportation system to get their products to market and to produce their products or services as cost effectively as possible; and

WHEREAS, should this trend of disinvestment in transportation continue, then the area transportation needs will not be met, placing our local economy at a competitive disadvantage; and

WHEREAS, the Chippewa Falls' East Bridge Project is dependent upon funding by the Wisconsin State Legislature and would be among those State-wide projects that would be postponed if the Legislature fails to address the shortfall in transportation funding in the current budget process; and

WHEREAS, it is incumbent upon the Wisconsin State Legislature and the Governor to find a balanced and equitable approach to funding the state's transportation programs at levels sufficient enough to meet the needs on both the State and Local Highway systems; and

WHEREAS, the Transportation Development Association (T.D.A.) has recognized the need for additional transportation-related revenue and has proposed doing so by increasing the gasoline tax by three (3) cents per gallon and the vehicle registration fee by \$10, and by eliminating the consumption factor in the indexing formula.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CHIPPEWA FALLS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION:

1. That the Board of Directors of the Chippewa Falls Industrial Development Corporation hereby expresses its support for the Transportation Revenue package proposed by the Transportation Development Association to enable funding of the East Bridge Corridor in this 1997-1999 Biennial Budget.
2. That a copy of this document be forwarded to the Governor of the State of Wisconsin, to the Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, to the Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Administration, to the members of the Joint Finance Committee and to our representatives in the Wisconsin Legislature.

Dated this 21st day of April, 1997

ADOPTED: April 21, 1997

APPROVED:

President

ATTEST:

Secretary